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3 February 1973

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: State's Initial Response to NSSM-167

1. Attached for your information is a copy of State's initial response to NSSM-167 (also attached), which is to be discussed at the SRG meeting now scheduled for 1500 Tuesday, 6 February.
2. This paper is a rather waffly piece of typical State Department prose which suffers from a critical defect: its drafters had no real concept (or, apparently, guidance) concerning what the proposed Vietnam Conference was supposed to do or achieve. It is rather difficult to write a tight study of a complex issue when the root question involved therein is left unanswered.
3. The production of this piece has been something of a Chinese fire drill. I got a call from State Tuesday afternoon (30 January) saying State was tasked with preparing the initial response to NSSM-167 with inputs from Defense and CIA. The request was a rather difficult one since the response was due at the White House by opening of business on Thursday, 1 February, though as of Tuesday afternoon (when I was called) the text of the request (i.e. NSSM-167) had not yet been issued. (You will find that this sort of situation is far from unusual.) I was asked to attend a "brainstorming session" (State's term) on 31 January. This session got postponed to 1 February and then was scrubbed. State, meanwhile, got its 1 February deadline slipped to 2 February.
4. At about 1830 on Thursday, 1 February, I received part of State's draft (the remainder came over Friday morning). I took the line that given the situation, the nature of the subject, the time pressure and my unwillingness to concur in a draft I had not read (part of which I had not even seen), it would probably be best for State to go ahead and meet its deadline with a unilateral submission.

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5. I did, however, take strong exception to State's original language for Article II of its proposed "Act of Paris". State's draft spoke of "Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia", i.e. formally spoke of "Viet-Nam" as one country. I noted that this language would send the GVN straight up the wall, and further, give back most of what we had extracted from North Vietnam over the past three months on the key juridicial issue that both Hanoi and Saigon regarded as central. State said their phrase was an "oversight" and my points were well taken.

6. Copies of the final State submission reached us late on 2 February. The only changes from its first draft are the additions to Article II (underlined in your text) made at my suggestion.

7. On Tuesday morning, 6 February, we will give you a set of consolidated Agency comments on the State response to NSSM-167 for your background information prior to attending the SRG. We will also give you a situation brief of the kind the DCI normally has given at the opening of Indochina WSAG and SRG meetings.

[REDACTED]  
George A. Carver, Jr.

Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

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Attachments

cc: General Walters

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